

Message Text

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NEA/ARP - MR. TWINAM

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TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
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AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USMISSION SINAI
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
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USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE
SECDEF WASHDC 0000

JCS WASHDC 0000
CIA WASHDC 0000
USICA WASHDC
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS POUCH

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CINCEUR FOR POLAD; TEL AVIV FOR PAO, DELIVER BY 9 A.M.

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:SOPN

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - JUNE 30, 1978 -
SPOKESMAN FOR DAY, HODDING CARTER:

Q I HAVE A SERIES OF QUESTIONS DEALING WITH MIDDLE EAST
AFFAIRS; AND I'D LIKE TO START, IF I MAY, PLEASE, WITH WHAT
THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S REACTION IS TO THE PLO CRIME
YESTERDAY IN JERUSALEM.

A. WE CONDEMN THIS SAVAGE ACT, FOR WHICH A UNIT UNDER
CONTROL OF FATAH HAS CLAIMED CREDIT.

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Q. I KNOW THAT YOU DIDN'T NAME THE PLO AS SUCH, BUT FATAH
IS A MILITARY ARM OF THE PLO AND WOULD YOU CONSIDER THE
KILLINGS IN A MARKETPLACE IN JERUSALEM A MILITARY OPERA-
TION?

A. IT IS AN ORGANIZATION OF THE PLO. I CONSIDER IT A
TERRORIST ACT. ANY CONDEMNATION OF THIS ATROCITY EXTENDS
TO THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR IT. AND SINCE FATAH HAS CLAIMED
CREDIT FOR IT, WE EXTEND THE RESPONSIBILITY TO THAT
ORGANIZATION.

Q. IS THAT A WRITTEN STATEMENT THAT YOU HAVE THERE?

A. YES, IT IS. WHY DON'T I JUST GO THROUGH THIS WHOLE
THING AND THEN MAYBE YOU MIGHT WANT TO ASK ME SOME
QUESTIONS.

THE DEPARTMENT WANTS TO MAKE CLEAR THAT WE VIEW THE PLO
AS AN ORGANIZATION, ELEMENTS AND MEMBERS OF WHICH ADVOCATE
AND CARRY OUT ACTS OF TERRORISM. WE CONDEMN SUCH ACTS AND
THOSE ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS WHO PERPETRATE THEM.

TO REPEAT MYSELF IN THIS REGARD, WE CONDEMN TODAY'S BOMB-
ING IN JERUSALEM, FOR WHICH AN ORGANIZATION OF THE PLO HAS
CLAIMED RESPONSIBILITY, AND CONDEMN THOSE WHO PERPETRATED
THIS ATROCITY COMMITTED AGAINST INNOCENT PEOPLE. WE EXTEND
OUR DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO THE VICTIMS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

IN GENERAL TERMS, WE CONDEMN TERRORIST ACTS IN THE ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS THAT PERPETRATE THEM. THAT, THEREFORE, FOLLOWS THAT THE CONDEMNATION EXTENDS TO FATAH.

ON THE QUESTION OF THE CONNECTION OF THAT TO THE LARGER QUESTION WHICH HAS ARISEN IN CONNECTION WITH TESTIMONY BY DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY HARROP AND MR. ATHERTON, AL FATAH IS THE DOMINANT ELEMENT IN THE PLO, WITH MORE UNCLASSIFIED

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MEMBERS ON THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE THAN ANY OTHER CONSTUENT ORGANIZATION. THEREFORE, MAJOR ELEMENTS AND IMPORTANT LEADERS OF THE PLO CLEARLY ADVOCATE TERRORISM.

IT IS NOT CORRECT, HOWEVER, TO SAY THAT THE TWO ARE SYNONYMOUS AS THERE ARE OTHER ORGANIZATIONS UNDER THE PLO UMBRELLA AND MANY PERSONS AFFILIATED WITH THE ORGANIZATION IN AN INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY WHO DO NOT ADVOCATE OR CONDONE TERRORISM.

BUT SPECIFICALLY ON THE JERUSALEM BOMBING, OUR CONDEMNATION FOR ANY TERRORIST ACT APPLIES TO THE LEADER OF THE ORGANIZATION WHICH TOOK RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ATROCITY.

IN THIS CASE, OF COURSE, THIS INCLUDES YASSER ARAFAT, WHO IS THE HEAD OF BOTH AL FATAH AND THE PLO.

THE STATEMENT THAT I'VE JUST READ TO YOU REPRESENTS THE ADMINISTRATION'S VIEW ON THE QUESTION OF THE PLO AND TERRORISM. IT CLEARLY SUPERSEDES ANY OTHER STATEMENTS THAT HAVE BEEN MADE.

Q. COULD YOU DRAW A DISTINCTION BETWEEN WHAT YOU ARE SAYING RIGHT NOW AND WHAT MR. BEGIN SAID TODAY? I QUOTE -- "BOTH NATIONS, SMALL AND LARGE, FOUGHT FOR THEIR LIBERATION AT GREAT SACRIFICIES VALIANTLY -- FEW AGAINST THE MANY, WEAK AGAINST THE STRONG." WOULDNT THIS FIT, WHAT HE'S SAYING NOW? THE PLO IS FIGHTING TO LIBERATE THIS LAND.

A. THE ACCEPTANCE OF WHAT AN ORGANIZATION SAYS THAT IT STANDS FOR IS ONE THING AND THE CONDEMNATION OF WHAT AN ORGANIZATION DOES IN A PARTICULAR SET OF CIRCUMSTANCES IS UNCLASSIFIED

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ANOTHER, AND I CAN ONLY DEAL NOW WITH WHAT THE ORGANIZATION DOES AND CLAIMS THAT IT DOES.

Q. ONE THING IS PUZZLING HERE, AT LEAST; THERE HAVE BEEN

OTHER ACTS OF TERRORISM AND ON OTHER OCCASIONS THE PLO, OR PARTS OF IT, HAS CLAIMED RESPONSIBILITY. THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S RESPONSE IN THOSE CASES HAS ALWAYS BEEN KIND OF ELLIPTICAL AND FLAKY. THIS PARTICULAR TIME YOU ARE GETTING CLOSE TO ZEROING IN ON PEOPLE AND ORGANIZATIONS AND I AM WONDERING WHAT IS DIFFERENT ABOUT THEM.

A. IN MY OWN EXPERIENCE IN HAVING TO DEAL WITH THIS, THERE HAVE BEEN TIMES WHEN WE HAVE SPOKEN DIRECTLY TO THE QUESTION OF A SUBORDINATE ORGANIZATION; AND WE HAVE SAID IT IN OTHER OCCASIONS IN WHICH THERE WAS LESS CERTAINTY -- OR TWO OR THREE MORE WOULD CLAIM IT -- OR THERE WAS SOME AMBIGUITY IN IT. THAT WOULD BE ONE ANSWER AS TO WHY THERE WOULD NOT ALWAYS BE THE SAME RESPONSE.

THE SECOND IS -- WHAT I AM OF COURSE OBVIOUSLY CONTINUING TO DO, IS TO DRAW A DISTINCTION BETWEEN THOSE UNDER THE UMBRELLA WHO DO IN FACT ENGAGE IN VIOLENCE AND THOSE WHO DO NOT ADVOCATE OR ENGAGE IN VIOLENCE.

I CAN'T GIVE YOU MUCH OF A REASON BEYOND THAT -- EXCEPT OF COURSE, THAT THE QUESTION HAS ARISEN TO SOME LEVEL OF ATTENTION THE LAST COUPLE OF DAYS.

Q. AS A FACTUAL MATTER, DO YOU REMEMBER ANOTHER SINGLING OUT OF ARAFAT IN THIS CONNECTION BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT?

A. NO, I DON'T.

Q. WHAT THEN IS THE VIEW OF THE DEPARTMENT ABOUT PLO'S POSSIBLE REPRESENTATION OF THE PALESTINIANS IN THE NEGOTIATIONS?
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A. OUR VIEW REMAINS WHAT HAS ALWAYS BEEN OFFERED.

Q. WOULD YOU SAY THEN, THAT THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT CONSIDERS THE PLO A TERRORIST ORGANIZATION?

A. NO, I CAN'T SAY THAT. I HAVE TO SAY WHAT I HAVE SAID.

Q. WHY CAN'T YOU SAY THAT?

A. SIMPLY FOR THE REASON THAT I HAVE JUST NOTED -- THAT IT IS AN UMBRELLA ORGANIZATION WHICH INCLUDES A NUMBER OF SUBGROUPINGS, AND THAT I AM INCAPABLE OF SAYING THAT ALL SUBGROUPINGS FALL INTO THAT HEADING. I CAN, HOWEVER, SPECIFY THOSE ELEMENTS WHICH ACT IN WAYS WHICH WE CONSIDER TO BE TERRORIST; AND I HAVE JUST SPECIFIED ONE.

Q. NOW AT THE TESTIMONY GIVEN BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS AT THE SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING ON WEDNESDAY,

THE STATEMENT WAS MADE THAT THE UNITED STATES HAD HAD NO OCCASION ON WHICH TO CONDEMN THE PLO AS TERRORISTS OR NONTERRORIST. OF COURSE, THE PLO HAS BEEN IN EXISTENCE AS SUCH, WE KNOW IT, SINCE 1974. WHAT OCCASION IS NECESSARY TO CONDEMN THE PLO PUBLICLY AS A TERRORIST ORGANIZATION?

A. I CAN'T GET INTO HYPOTHETICALS. I THINK, HOWEVER, HAVING GIVEN YOU THE REASON WHY I AM INCAPABLE OF DOING A BLANKET CONDEMNATION, YOU COULD DRAW A CONCLUSION THAT IF EVERY ORGANIZATION IN -- LET US TAKE A MYTHICAL ORGANIZATION -- WERE TO ENDORSE TERRORISM AS A TACTIC, THAT WOULD THEREFORE LEAD TO A CONCLUSION OF WHAT YOU COULD SAY ABOUT IT.

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BUT WHAT I WANT TO EMPHASIZE HERE IS THAT WHAT I AM SAYING HERE IS TAKEN, IN ANY CASE, TO REPRESENT THE ADMINISTRATION POLICY, AND TO SUPERSEDE WHAT HAS BEEN SAID BEFORE.

Q. THERE IS LEGISLATION NOW IN THE SENATE AND IN THE HOUSE, DEALING WITH TERRORISM. CONGRESSMAN DARGANS HAS A BILL WHICH IS IN THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE NOW, WHICH GOES TO MATTERS DEALING WITH TERRORISTS IN THE UNITED STATES -- TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS, ALIENS, AND WITHOUT MENTIONING THE PLO, THE PLO OF COURSE RUNS ALL THROUGH THIS. THE OTHER IS THE RIBICOFF BILL, WHICH IS DESIGNED TO HAVE THE PRESIDENT CURTAIL ASSISTANCE FOR COUNTRIES THAT HARBOR TERRORISTS.

HAS THE STATE DEPARTMENT, OR THE ADMINISTRATION SUPPORTED THESE TWO PIECES OF LEGISLATION? IS IT PREPARED TO SUPPORT

THEM? WHAT IS IT PREPARED TO DO?

A. I DON'T REMEMBER THE FIRST ONE; AND I DON'T WANT TO TRY TO PULL IT OUT OF MY EAR.

ON THE RIBICOFF BILL, WE HAVE HAILED THE OBJECTIVES OF THAT BILL. WE HAVE WORKED CLOSELY WITH SENATOR AND HIS STAFF IN MOVING THAT BILL ALONG, IN REFINING IT; AND WE BELIEVE IN ITS OBJECTIVES. BUT I REALLY AM NOT GOING TO BE ABLE TO PULL OUT WHETHER THAT MEANS THAT EVERY COMMA AND LINE IN THERE IS SOMETHING THAT WE SUPPORT FULL. THE SECRETARY HAS TESTIFIED BEFORE THAT COMMITTEE WHEN HE RETURNED FROM A TRIP EARLIER THIS YEAR, LAYING OUT OUR GENERAL PRINCIPLES; AND WE HAVE SINCE, WORKED WITH THEM VERY CLOSELY.

Q. ON THE DARGANS BILL, THERE ARE 29 SPONSORS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE HOUSE, FROM BOTH MAJOR PARTIES, AND I AM WONDERING WHETHER OR NOT MAYBE NEXT WEEK, PERHAPS YOU CAN

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GIVE US SOME CLUES AS TO HOW THE ADMINISTRATION LOOKS UPON THAT.

A. LET ME TAKE THE QUESTION ON THAT BILL -- I HAVE NO IDEA YET.

Q. IS YOUR STATEMENT IN PART OCCASIONED BY THE VICE PRESIDENT'S VISIT?

A. I COULDN'T ANSWER THAT QUESTION IN ANY CASE, BECAUSE I DON'T KNOW, FACTUALLY. I WOULD SAY THAT IT WAS IN GREAT PART OCCASIONED BY THE CONFUSION WHICH HAS ARISEN OVER THE LAST FEW DAYS, AND QUESTIONS THAT HAVE ARISEN OUT OF TESTIMONY OVER THE LAST FEW DAYS.

Q. MY UNDERSTANDING OF THE AMERICAN FORMULATION FOR PALESTINIAN PARTICIPATION IN NEGOTIATIONS, IS THAT THEY SHOULD HAVE THE RIGHT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DETERMINATION OF THEIR FUTURE. ARE YOU MAKING A DISTINCTION BETWEEN THOSE WHO ADVOCATE VIOLENCE AND TERRORISM, AND THOSE WHO DO NOT? OR YOU ARE SAYING YOU DO NOT MAKE THAT DISTINCTION IN TERMS OF WHOM SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN THE NEGOTIATIONS.

A. THE QUESTION OF THE DEFINITION OF WHO AND HOW PEOPLE SHOULD PARTICIPATE, IS CLEARLY A MAJOR QUESTION TO BE RESOLVED BY NEGOTIATION BETWEEN THE TWO PARTIES AND WE ARE NOT ATTEMPTING TO MAKE THAT DETERMINATION FOR THE MAJOR PARTIES. THAT IS UNCHANGED ALSO.

Q. WOULD YOU BE ABLE TAKE THE QUESTION ON WHO ARE THE ELEMENTS THAT YOU CONSIDER IN THE PLO, UNDER THE UMBRELLA OF THE PLO, WHO ARE NOT ADVOCATING TERRORISM?

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A. I, IN FACT, ONCE HAD THAT LIST. I DON'T HAVE IT IN FRONT OF ME NOW. I WOULD NOT TRY TO LIST ALL OF THEM.

I WANT TO STRESS THAT THIS SAYS, NOT ONLY ARE THERE ORGANIZATIONS AFFILIATED WITH THE PLO, BUT ALSO INDIVIDUALS WHO INDIVIDUALLY CLAIM MEMBERSHIP -- AND I AM REALLY NOT GOING TO GO DOWN THE LIST OF ALL OF THEM. BUT I WILL SEE IF I CAN'T ANSWER THAT QUESTION FOR YOU.

Q. HAVE YOU ANY IDEA WHEN THE EGYPTIANS WILL BE PRESENTING THEIR PROPOSALS?

A. THE SAME ANSWER AS YESTERDAY.

Q. YOU DON'T HAVE IT. IS THAT CORRECT?

A. THAT'S CORRECT.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS ON THE RECENT PROBLEMS IN LEBANON?

A. NO, I DON'T.

Q. I WOULD LIKE TO GO BACK, IF I MAY, TO THE QUESTION OF THE PLO. YOU HAVE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THAT YASSAR ARAFAT HAS EVER BEEN SINGLED OUT FOR SPECIFIC CRITICISM. WOULD THIS MAKE HIM UNACCEPTABLE INSOFAR AS THE US GOVERNMENT IS CONCERNED AS THE LEADER OF A PALESTINIAN NEGOTIATING PARTY?

A. OUR POSITION ON THE PARTICIPATION OF THE PLO, AGAIN, IS UNCHANGED, AND IT INVOLVES THE SAME ELEMENTS, AS I HAVE SUGGESTED BEFORE FROM HERE AND OTHER PODIUMS, AND AS INDEED THE PRESIDENT AND THE SECRETARY HAVE. I AM NOT IN A POSITION TO GO BEYOND THAT.

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Q. PERHAPS YOU COULD JUST REFRESH MY MEMORY ON WHAT THE POSITION IS, THEN, TOWARDS THE PARTICIPATION OF THE --

A. THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE PERTINENT RESOLUTIONS HAVING TO DO WITH PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST, THE UN RESOLUTIONS, AND ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO EXISTENCE IN PEACE.

Q. AND ASSUMING THAT THOSE CONDITIONS WERE MET, YASSAR ARAFAT WOULD, FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF THE UNITED STATES BE ACCEPTABLE AS THE LEADER OF SUCH A DELEGATION?

A. THE FORMULATION ON THIS IS THAT WE WOULD BE WILLING TO TALK TO THE PLO. AS TO WHO THE PLO AND WHAT PART THE PLO WOULD PLAY, THAT AGAIN IS A MATTER QUITE FRANKLY WHICH IS FOR THE PARTIES AND NOT FOR US TO SAY.

Q. WHAT I FIND SOMEWHAT CURIOUS IS THAT FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE STATUS OF YASSAR ARAFAT FROM THE -- OR AT LEAST IN THE PERCEPTION OF THE UNITED STATES -- SEEMS TO HAVE OFFICIALLY CHANGED, AND YET YOUR POLICY TOWARD YASSAR ARAFAT DOES NOT APPEAR TO HAVE CHANGED.

A. BUT OUR POLICY DOESN'T GO TO THE QUESTION YOU ARE ASKING ME. I HAVE ALREADY TOLD YOU WHAT OUR POLICY IS INSOFAR AS WHO REPRESENTS THE PALESTINIANS, HOW THEY ARE TO BE REPRESENTED. ALL OF THESE ARE MATTERS WHICH ARE AT THE HEART OF THE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE PARTIES.

Q. SO, IN OTHER WORDS, WHETHER YASSAR ARAFAT IS OR IS NOT CATEGORIZED AS A TERRORIST OR WHETHER HE IS OR IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ACTIONS OF TERRORIST GROUPS IS REALLY IRRELEVANT TO THE FORMULATION THAT YOU HAVE DESCRIBED HERE THIS AFTERNOON.
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A. WHAT I AM SAYING IS THAT YOU ARE ASKING ME A QUESTION ABOUT APPLES AND A QUESTION ABOUT ORANGES, AND IF YOU ARE ASKING ME HOW OR WHETHER HE SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN THE NEGOTIATIONS ON THE FUTURE OF THAT PART OF THE WORLD, I AM SAYING THAT IS A QUESTION WHICH HAS TO BE DECIDED BY THE PARTIES. AND WHAT IS NOT RELEVANT IS WHAT I HAVE TO SAY ABOUT THAT. WHAT IS RELEVANT IS WHAT THE PARTIES WANT THEMSELVES.

YOU KNOW, YOU ARE GOING TO WORRY THIS ONE AND WORRY IT FROM WHAT IS A FAIRLY CLEAR STANDARD LINE, AND YOU CAN GO WITH IT. BUT THERE IS NO CHANGE ON IT.

Q. I AM NOT TALKING ABOUT ANY CONTACT THAT MIGHT TAKE PLACE BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND YASSAR ARAFAT.

A. WE HAVE SAID BEFORE, AND AS FAR AS I AM CONCERNED, I KNOW OF NO CHANGE ON THIS AT THIS TIME.

Q. COULD YOU PUT IN SIMPLE TERMS, ARE YOU SAYING THAT AS A RESULT OF THE ACTION THAT TOOK PLACE IN JERUSALEM

YESTERDAY THAT THE DEPARTMENT CONSIDERS ARAFAT, FATAH -- BECAUSE FATAH IS THE DOMINANT BRANCH WITHIN THE PLO -- THE PLO ITSELF TO BE TERRORIST?

A. NO, I HAVE NOT CHANGED THAT POSITION.

Q. YOU ARE NOT SAYING THAT.

A. THAT IS CORRECT.

Q. ALL RIGHT. THEN, COULD YOU TELL US IN WHAT WAY ARAFAT, THE PLO AND FATAH ARE TERRORISTS?

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A. CERTAINLY. INsofar AS FATAH IS CONCERNED, AN ORGANIZATION WHICH TAKES CREDIT FOR TERRORIST ACTS IS TERRORIST. THE PERSON WHO HEADS AN ORGANIZATION WHICH ENGAGES IN TERRORIST ACTS HEADS A TERRORIST ORGANIZATION.

Q. AND IS A TERRORIST HIMSELF.

A. IS IN THIS CASE, IN THE CASE THAT I AM TALKING ABOUT, THE CONDEMNATION THAT WE HAVE OF TERRORIST ACTS, EXTENDS TO THE HEAD OF THAT ORGANIZATION.

Q. THEN HE IS A TERRORIST, IS THAT WHAT YOU ARE SAYING?

A. THAT ORGANIZATION HAS CLAIMED RESPONSIBILITY FOR IT, THEREFORE THE CONDEMNATION OF TERRORISM EXTENDS TO HIM OF TERRORIST ACTIVITY, WHICH IS WHAT I HAVE SAID.

Q. WHY CAN'T YOU -- IS HE A TERRORIST?

A. HE IS THE HEAD OF AN ORGANIZATION WHICH DEALS -- YOU KNOW, BEFORE WE GO INTO TEXTUAL ANALYSIS ON THIS, LET US REMEMBER THAT PARTICULARLY IN CUTTING, AS WE ARE, INTO AN AREA WHERE, AS YOU HAVE NOTED THERE ARE NEW FOOTPRINTS, THE SPOKESMAN IS NOT VERY OFTEN GOING TO GO BEYOND THE LANGUAGE THAT IS RIGHT IN FRONT OF HIM, NOT EVEN IN RESPONSE TO REALLY VERY GOOD QUESTIONS. I THINK, HOWEVER, THAT WITHOUT ME HAVING TO WRITE YOUR HEADLINE OR LEAD FOR YOU, YOU PRETTY WELL GOT WHAT YOU NEED OUT OF THIS.

Q. YOU STILL HAVEN'T ANSWERED THE QUESTION.

A. NO, I HAVE NOT.

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Q. YOU JUST SAID NOW THAT IF THE PLO ACCEPTED THE 242, YOU MAY CHANGE YOUR POLICY AND TALK WITH THEM. AND THE

ISRAELIS, ON THE OTHER HAND, REFUSED TO TALK TO THEM EVEN IF THEY CHANGE THEIR POLICY AND ACCEPT THE 242. WHAT GOOD WOULD TALKING WITH THEM DO TO THE PALESTINIAN CAUSE? WOULD YOU BE ABLE TO FORCE THE ISRAELIS TO ACCEPT?

A. NO, I AM NOT SUGGESTING WE WILL FORCE ANYTHING. I AM SUGGESTING THAT WE WOULD BE WILLING TO TALK, AS WE HAVE SAID BEFORE. BUT THAT IS A DIFFERENT QUESTION.

Q. AND IT WOULD BE UP TO THE PLO OR ANY OTHER ORGANIZATION THAT WE WERE WILLING TO TALK TO THAT DESIGNATED ITS OWN LEADERS, AND SO ON, AND SPOKESMEN IN SUCH TALKS?

A. THAT IS USUALLY THE WAY IT GOES IN SUCH THINGS?

Q. SO YOU ARE NOT RULING OUT THE POSSIBILITY OF TALKING TO ARAFAT.

A. NOW, WAIT A MINUTE, SAVE ME THAT ONE. IF PRIOR

CONDITIONS ARE MET WHICH WE HAVE ESTABLISHED, WE HAVE SAID THAT WE ARE WILLING TO TALK TO THE PLO. WHEN THOSE CONDITIONS ARE MET, WE WILL SEE WHO IT IS THAT WE ARE TALKING TO. I AM NOT GOING TO TRY TO ANTICIPATE THAT. I DON'T KNOW.

Q. ON LIBYA, PROXMIRE'S OFFICE SAYS THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE HAS REVERSED ITS POLICY ON SELLING HEAVY TRUCKS TO LIBYA.

A. THE SECRETARY HAS RECONFIRMED THE DEPARTMENT'S EARLIER DECISION TO RECOMMEND TO THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE THAT THE EXPORT OF HEAVY TRUCKS TO LIBYA BE PROHIBITED UNDER THE EXPORT CONTROL REGULATIONS.
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THE SECRETARY PERSONALLY REVIEWED THIS QUESTION AT THE REQUEST OF SENATORS PROXMIRE AND NELSON AND CONGRESSMAN STEIGER.

THE OSHKOSH TRUCK COMPANY CORPORATION HAD PLANNED TO EXPORT 400 HEAVY DUTY TRUCKS TO LIBYA TO BE USED BY THE LIBYAN MILITARY TO TRANSPORT TANKS.

IN LIGHT OF LIBYA'S SUPPORT FOR TERRORIST ACTIVITIES AND ITS EFFORTS TO UNDERMINE NEIGHBORING GOVERNMENTS, WE HAVE CONCLUDED THAT IT IS NOT IN THE FOREIGN POLICY INTERESTS OF THE UNITED STATES TO PERMIT THESE TRUCKS TO BE EXPORTED.

Q. WHAT ARE THEY GOING TO DO WITH THE TRUCKS?

A. ON THE QUESTION OF DIDN'T THE COMMERCE DEPARTMENT PREVIOUSLY OKAY THE EXPORT OF THESE TRUCKS, THE COMMERCE DEPARTMENT DID INFORM OSHKOSH, WHEN ASKED, THAT VALIDATED LICENSE WAS NOT REQUIRED FOR THE TRUCK THEY DESCRIBED. HOWEVER, THE COMPANY DID NOT HAVE ANY TRUCKS READY FOR DELIVERY AT THAT TIME.

THE TRUCKS WERE TO BE DELIVERED BETWEEN AUGUST 1978 AND JUNE 1979.

THE COMMERCE DEPARTMENT DID NOT AND COULD NOT HAVE TOLD THE COMPANY THAT THE TRUCKS WOULD BE EXPORTABLE WITHOUT LICENSE IN THE FUTURE.

INSOFAR AS BEING MISLED, HOWEVER, THE COMPANY WAS CLEARLY WARNED ON FEBURARY 24TH, BEFORE THE SALES
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CONTRACT BECAME FINAL, THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE WAS TROUBLED BY THE POTENTIAL SALE AND WAS LIKELY TO TAKE STEPS TO PREVENT IT.

Q. WHY WAS THE INITIAL INDICATION FROM THE COMMERCE DEPARTMENT TO THE TRUCKING COMPANY THAT AT SUCH TIME AS THEY HAD NO TRUCKS, IT WAS OKAY TO EXPORT THEM?

A. I DON'T KNOW. YOU MIGHT ASK COMMERCE.

Q. AND THEN WHEN THEY GOT THE TRUCKS, THEY WERE TOLD THAT IT WASN'T OKAY.

A. I BELIEVE THAT IS THE SEQUENCE, BUT YOU MIGHT ASK COMMERCE AGAIN, WHICH DOES HAVE THE FINAL DECISION-MAKING IN THIS REGARD IN ANY CASE.

Q. DOESN'T THAT COMMERCE DEPARTMENT ASSURANCE SOMEWHAT UNDERMINE ALL THE LATER CONCERNS OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT? IF THEY SAID THAT VALIDATED LICENSES WERE NOT REQUIRED, WHETHER THE TRUCKS WERE AVAILABLE OR NOT AVAILABLE, IT SEEMS TO ME THEY SET THE PRINCIPLE THERE.

A. FOR THE TRUCK THAT THEY DESCRIBED, THAT IS CORRECT.

Q. WELL, DID THE TRUCK TYPE CHANGE?

A. IT WAS DONE IN ADVANCE AND BEFORE ANY SALES CONTRACT WAS FINAL, THEY WERE TOLD THAT WE HAD RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE SALE.

Q. WHAT IS GOING TO HAPPEN TO THE TRUCKS RIGHT NOW? IS THE STATE DEPARTMENT GOING TO BUY THEM FROM THE COMPANY, THEN?

A. NO.
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Q. WHAT?

A. I DON'T KNOW.

Q. IS THERE NO COMPENSATION PLAN FOR THE COMPANY?

A. NO. THE COMPANY HAS TOLD US THAT THE OSHKOSH TRUCK CORPORATION AND THE CITY OF OSHKOSH WILL SUFFER AN ECONOMIC LOSS IF THE TRUCKS CANNOT BE EXPORTED. WE DON'T HAVE ANY REASON TO DOUBT THIS, AND WE REGRET THAT RESULT.

Q. ANYWAY, YOU REGARD THEN THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S EXPRESSION OF CONCERN SUPERSEDED THEN THE COMMERCE

DEPARTMENT'S INDICATION THAT --

A. NO. I AM SAYING THAT YOU ARE GOING TO HAVE TO GO TO
COMMERCE. AND I AM NOT GOING TO TRY TO WALK THAT ONE,
BECAUSE I DON'T KNOW ENOUGH TO DO SO.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY COST FIGURES ON THOSE TRUCKS?
EITHER FOR THE WHOLE DEAL OR ANY --?

A. NO. I DON'T.

Q. FOR AN INDIVIDUAL TRUCK?

A. NO, I DON'T. VANCE

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